

these years with a strong and loving family, including a fabulous woman named Laura Bush. I believe she's the finest First Lady in our Nation's history. Just don't tell mother. [Laughter] And in this job, I have had no finer example of character, decency, and integrity than the first man to be called President George Bush.

This isn't a farewell speech, because we've got a lot to do this year. I want you to know my energy is up, my spirits are high, and I am going to finish this

job strong. So with confidence in our vision, strong belief in our philosophy, faith in our values, let us go forward, reclaim the Congress, and elect John McCain as President in 2008.

God bless you, and God bless America.

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:29 p.m. at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center. In his remarks, he referred to Rep. Jeb Hensarling, chairman, 2008 President's Dinner, and his wife Melissa.

## Message to the Congress on Continuation of the National Emergency With Respect to the Risk of Nuclear Proliferation Created by the Accumulation of Weapons-Usable Fissile Material in the Territory of the Russian Federation

June 18, 2008

*To the Congress of the United States:*

Section 202(d) of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622(d)) provides for the automatic termination of a national emergency unless, prior to the anniversary date of its declaration, the President publishes in the *Federal Register* and transmits to the Congress a notice stating that the emergency is to continue in effect beyond the anniversary date. In accordance with this provision, I have sent to the *Federal Register* for publication the enclosed notice stating that the emergency declared in Executive Order 13159 of June 21, 2000, with respect to the risk of nuclear proliferation created by the accumulation of a large volume of weapons-usable fissile material in the territory of the Russian Federation is to continue beyond June 21, 2008.

It remains a major national security goal of the United States to ensure that fissile material removed from Russian nuclear weapons pursuant to various arms control and disarmament agreements is dedicated to peaceful uses, subject to transparency measures, and protected from diversion to

activities of proliferation concern. The accumulation of a large volume of weapons-usable fissile material in the territory of the Russian Federation continues to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States. For this reason, I have determined that it is necessary to continue the national emergency declared with respect to the risk of nuclear proliferation created by the accumulation of a large volume of weapons-usable fissile material in the territory of the Russian Federation and maintain in force these emergency authorities to respond to this threat.

GEORGE W. BUSH

The White House,

June 18, 2008.

NOTE: This message was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 19. The notice is listed in Appendix D at the end of this volume.

## Remarks on Presenting the Presidential Medal of Freedom June 19, 2008

*The President.* Welcome to the White House for what is going to be a joyous occasion. Mr. Vice President, Justice Scalia, members of my Cabinet and administration, Members of Congress, Medal of Freedom recipients and their families and friends: Thanks for coming. Laura and I are honored to welcome you here.

The Medal of Freedom is the highest civil honor a President can bestow. The award recognizes outstanding individuals who have been leaders in their chosen fields, have led lives of vision and character, and have made especially meritorious contributions to our Nation and the world. Today we add the names of six remarkable Americans to that select list.

The story of our first recipient begins in a poor neighborhood in the heart of Detroit. This was an environment where many young people lost themselves to poverty and crime and violence. For a time, young Ben Carson was headed down that same path. Yet through his reliance on faith and family, he turned his life into a sharply different direction. Today, Dr. Carson is one of the world's leading neurosurgeons. He is renowned for his successful efforts to separate conjoined twins and his expertise in controlling brain seizures. He has worked to be a motivating influence on young people. He and his wife Candy have started an organization that offers college scholarships to students across America. The child of Detroit who once saw a grim future became a scholar, a healer, and a leader.

Ben would be the first to tell you that his remarkable story would not be possible without the support of a woman who raised him and is at his side today. Some moms are simply forces of nature who never take no for an answer. *[Laughter]* I understand. *[Laughter]* Ben Carson's mom had a life filled with challenges. She was married at

the age of 13 and ultimately to—was left to raise her two sons alone. She made their education a high priority. Every week, the boys would have to check out library books and write reports on them. She would hand them back with check marks, as though she had reviewed them, never letting on that she couldn't read them. Even in the toughest times, she always encouraged her children's dreams. She never allowed them to see themselves as victims. She never, ever gave up. We're so thrilled you're here. Sonya Carson, welcome to the White House.

Ben has said that one of his role models is Booker T. Washington, who inspired millions and who was one of the first African American leaders ever to visit this house as a guest of a President. He walked on this very floor a little more than a century ago. Today, Ben Carson follows in his footsteps in more ways than one. He's lived true to the words that was once uttered by this great man: "Character, not circumstances, makes the man." Ben, you demonstrate that character every day through the life you lead, the care you provide, and the family that you put at the center of your life. Murray, B.J., and Rhoeysce, I know how proud your dad is of each of you. I'm delighted that you have a chance to see how proud our Nation is of him.

For his skills as a surgeon, high moral standards, and dedication to helping others, I am proud to bestow the Presidential Medal of Freedom on Dr. Benjamin S. Carson, Sr. *[Applause]* The bestowing part will take place a little later, Ben. *[Laughter]*

Three decades ago, a mysterious and terrifying plague began to take the lives of people across the world. Before this malady even had a name, it had a fierce opponent in Dr. Anthony Fauci. As the Director of